

1. A decoder comprising:

a processor for operating on a data stream of data having portions encoded

by respectively different compression standards;

a token generator responsive to the encoded data stream for generating at

least one data token and a control token corresponding to each of the different

compression standards; and

the processor being conditioned to process the at least one data token

according to the different compression standard to which the generated control token

corresponds.

2. The decoder of claim 1, wherein the processor comprises a pipeline

processor having stages, at least one of the stages being conditioned to process the

at least one data token according to the different compression standard to which the

generated control token corresponds.

3. The decoder of claim 2, wherein the at least one data token is altered

by the at least one of the stages.

4. The decoder of claim 2, wherein the at least one data token is altered

by the at least one of the stages and conveyed to another one of the stages for

further processing.

5. The decoder of claim 2, wherein the token generator resides in one of

the stages.

6. The decoder of claim 2, wherein the generated control token interfaces

with each of the stages.

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1 7. The decoder of claim 2, wherein the generated control token interacts
2 with predetermined ones of the stages.

1 8. The decoder of claim 2, wherein the at least one data token is altered
2 by the predetermined ones of the stages.

1 9. The decoder of claim 2, wherein the generated control token interacts
2 with adjacent ones of stages.

1 10. The decoder of claim 2, wherein the generated control token interacts
2 with non-adjacent ones of the stages.

1 11. A method of operating on a data stream of data having portions
2 encoded by respectively different standards comprising:
3 responsive to the encoded data stream, generating a control token
4 corresponding to each of the different standards and at least one data token; and
5 processing the at least one data token according to the different compression
6 standard to which the generated control token corresponds.

1 12. The method of claim 11, wherein processing the at least one data
2 token comprises altering the at least one data token.

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A pipeline video decoder and decompression system handles a plurality of separately encoded bit streams arranged as a single serial bit stream of digital bits and having separately encoded pairs of control codes and corresponding data carried in the serial bit stream. The pipeline system employs a plurality of interconnected stages to decode and decompress the single bit stream, including a start code detector. When in a search mode, the start code detector searches for a specific start code corresponding to one of multiple compression standards. The start code detector responding to the single serial bit stream generates control tokens and data tokens. A respective one of the tokens includes a plurality of data words. Each data word has an extension bit which indicates a presence of additional words therein. The data words are thereby unlimited in number. A token decode circuit positioned in certain of the stages recognizes certain of the tokens as control tokens pertinent to that stage and passes unrecognized control tokens to a succeeding stage. A reconfigurable decode and parser processing means positioned in certain of the stages is responsive to a recognized control token and reconfigures a particular stage to handle an identified data token. Methods relating to the decoder and decompression system include processing steps relating thereto